



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Flood Safety Tips

- Remember that flood conditions change rapidly and severe flooding can develop in minutes. Flood water levels can be much deeper than they appear. The depth of water may be difficult to assess, and flash floods in particular can be extremely dangerous
- Do not walk or drive through flood waters. More people drown in their cars during a flood than anywhere else.
- Floods and storms can also knock down power lines. Never go near a downed power line. Even when flood water levels appear to have subsided, electrical currents can travel through the remaining water for more than 100 yards. Contact your utility company or police department to report downed power lines.
- If your well has been flooded, assume the water in your home has been contaminated.
- If you are on a public water system, listen to your radio and television for news from public health departments to find out if your water is contaminated. If water is contaminated, bottled water is the best choice. If you can, get commercially bottled water that has been stored in tightly sealed containers for less than six months. Plan for one gallon per person per day.
- If you lose power, never use a gas oven, range, barbecue, hibachi, or portable propane heater to heat your home. These units give off deadly carbon monoxide.
- Flood waters may carry silt, raw sewage, oil, or chemical waste. Wash your hands frequently with soap and disinfected water to prevent spread of disease. This should be done before preparing or eating food and after flood cleanup when your hands may have touched articles contaminated from water or sewage.
- When in doubt, throw out fresh, frozen, or dry food, such as cereal, that may have been in contact with the water.
- If you can, wear gloves and boots at all times to avoid touching anything with bare hands or feet. Parents should not allow children to play in flood areas and should ensure that their children wash hands often.
- Take care of yourself and your family. Accept support from family, friends, and others. Talk about your feelings to release tension. Discuss the situation with children honestly and openly. Get proper nutrition and rest. Pace yourself, and take one step at a time. Don't be afraid to get help.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency